

# Central Southeast Regional Partnership (CSERP)

Status Report October, 2005

**What is CSERP?     A partnership of communities working together for a common and mutually beneficial and specific goal.**

The communities of Coffman Cove, Petersburg, and Wrangell recognized the need to capitalize on the upcoming Inter-Island Ferry Authority (IFA) service between our communities starting in 2006. By working cooperatively toward the common goal of economic development for the region, an ad hoc group was formed to further this effort.

## **Area covered**

The communities directly served by the IFA in Central Southeast Alaska are Coffman Cove, Petersburg, and Wrangell. CSERP plans to embrace associated IFA communities including the communities on Prince of Wales Island. Ketchikan and Juneau are natural partners, as they provide primary access to Central Southeast.

## **Working Group**

In conjunction with the DART program, the core working group for this effort includes 2 representatives from each community; one key representative for economic development from each city involved and one key representative from each community's recognized tourism entity. Other members of this core working group are representatives from the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (Commerce), the Alaska Marine Highway System, and the IFA.

## **Accomplishments to Date**

In October of 2004 these communities jointly sought technical assistance from Commerce and the US Economic Development Administration through their new Developing Alaska Rural Tourism (DART) program. We have held over a half dozen teleconference sessions and two face to face meetings, to determine a focus and strategy and develop the following mission statement:

**“to create a sub-regional development strategy that will define the links between communities, enhance recreational opportunities, support existing visitor industry jobs and create new business and job opportunities.”**

**The further goal of the partnership project is to determine how to implement the strategy with long term sustainable funding.**

A strategy is taking shape in which we, as a distinct part of Alaska, begin to

- Share the message - websites, brochures, marketing partnerships – example: “Alaska’s Rainforest Islands – where the forest meets the sea”
- Sustain the experience of the place; ‘living the brand’

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- Strive for consistency over the long haul – establish an organization, with adequate funding, to present a common marketing image for long enough to build brand recognition.

### **The Future of CSERP**

Our next critical step in ensuring the success of this effort is to expand the partnership to interested stakeholders. As CSERP expands its reach and develops its ongoing strategy we will actively recruit participation from stakeholders and interested business and community groups including but not limited to

- US Forest Service
- POW communities
- Alaska's Marine Highway
- SEAttrails
- CVBs
- State of Alaska Commerce
- ADFG
- Chambers of Commerce
- AK Airlines
- Native organizations
- Locally owned Merchants and Service providers
- ATIA

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING CSERP PLEASE CONTACT**

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